

sorry about the blood in your mouth (I wish it were mine) by TolkienGirl

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Summary: You are hanging by a thread. (Stancy angst, early S2)

sorry about the blood in your mouth (I wish it were mine)

You are hanging by a thread. You don't remember the myth, you don't know where the thread leads. You don't think the thread leads to happiness.

Happiness is not the point, these days.

You're so much luckier than your parents, right? So much luckier than Nancy's parents, too.

They don't even love each other.

You lie awake at night with the memory of her held close and you think, *Jesus Christ*, they don't even love each other, and they're still here.

Lucky. You're so lucky.

Most guys might be pissed, trading in sex for dinners at a dead friend's parents'. You're trying so hard not to be most guys anymore. You rushed the first time, and it wasn't worth it, to her.

You're just glad she still touches you, lets you touch her, even kisses you, once in a while, before you kiss her.

Nancy smiles when she kisses. You could get lost in that smile. You do.

And everything else? There's time. You've got time.

(Who was the goddamn guy with the thread?)

Deadlines sneak up on you and you're as good at missing them as you are at missing people. Which is to say: you do it, and then you feel like an idiot.

"Don't worry," Nance says, hand on your arm, voice all soft, eyes far, far away. "You'll figure out the college thing. You've got time."

We've got time, you almost say. Doesn't she listen when you tell her, you'll bite the bullet and work for your dad? College can wait. So can you. You're going to wait until the tense line of her shoulders slackens into something like peace.

A thread, maybe, but with a little more give.

(Orpheus? Hercules? Shit, now you're just rattling off every Greek

dude you've ever heard of, and none of them are right.)

You get these headaches and these nightmares that seem to be stitched together. They press behind your eyes in the same exact way.

The cowardly part of you wants to shout out that the Hollands have too many pictures of Barb, it's creepy is what it is, and you're tired, so tired, of eating baked ziti and smiling with your molars ground together.

You say none of this. Precisely none of it.

Time heals all wounds, right? And you've got time.

"I'm sorry," Nancy says dully. She is paler than usual in the blue light. It's eleven PM, an hour before either of your curfews, and you're dropping her home.

"Sorry?" You don't understand. Sometimes, you think you don't ever understand.

She starts unbuttoning her collar.

She says, "I know you want this."

She's shaking, wrists and hands.

It hits you hard, all of it. Her hands and her face and the way she apparently thinks you're the kind of guy to screw her in your car, in front of her parents' house, because you don't feel like waiting any longer.

(If you've got this right, the guy with the thread was an asshole.)

"Nance," you say, as softly as you possibly can, which isn't nearly soft enough, or good enough, or just...enough... "Nance, no. It's fine. I don't-I just want you to be OK."

Her hands fall to her lap, which is a mercy, but you're not expecting her to laugh, which she does.

"OK?" She does that little chin-down, eyes-up thing that always stops you in your goddamn tracks. Turns you to stone, maybe, if only stone could stay. "You want me to be OK?"

You thought it was alright for you to want that.

So. You don't remember the myths, and you don't know about college, and you try and try but you don't know the right thing to say. The right thing would make Nancy melt, not for you, but for herself. It would make her soft if that was what she wanted, happy if

that was what she wanted.

Following the thread has gotten you nowhere, so far. But you've got time.

You've got so much time.